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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL  
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

MONDAY, MAY 21, 2007

#### In Today's Papers

Opposition's Baykal, Sezer Attend Republic Rally in Samsun  
All papers report tens of thousands of Turks rallied in the streets of the Black Sea city of Samsun on Sunday in support of the secular republic ahead of the July 22 parliamentary elections. Deniz Baykal and Zeki Sezer, the leaders of the main opposition CHP and the smaller left-wing DSP, attended the demonstration without addressing the crowd themselves. "Our people asked us to unite and we did; now we are expecting unity displayed at the ballot box," CHP leader Baykal told the press. The crowds, chanting "Turkey is secular and will remain secular," carried Turkish flags and posters of Ataturk.

Like in previous rallies, women played a leading role in the rally in Samsun, papers report.

Baser May Quit in June  
Hurriyet, Sabah and Star report Turkey's counter-terrorism coordinator Edip Baser Sunday told all-news broadcaster NTV, "We expect a forward step from the US regarding the PKK. If we don't see it, I personally think that there's no sense in pushing the mechanism any further." Mainstream Sabah reports Baser said he will resign in June after seeing that "last move." The paper speculates the last move Baser anticipated could be the handing over of a senior PKK figure to Turkey, a joint strike against the PKK in Mount Kandil, US operations against the PKK, or the cutting of the financial flow to the organization from Europe.

Emin Pazarci writes the nationalist Bugun: "The Turkish army has been seriously concerned over the PKK in Northern Iraq. During a recent high level meeting with US officials, Turkey reacted harshly when Americans complained that Turkey was being unfair to them. Turkish officials apologized saying, "Imagine if Turkish troops in Afghanistan supported the Taliban. What would you think and how would you feel about that? That's exactly how we feel about US activities in Iraq." Moreover, Turkish troops are currently engaging in military operations in northern Iraq. PKK targets are

hit via artillery. Turkish troops are stationed within 8 to 10 kilometers of the border, some of them permanently. As for the Americans there, they are just watching and photographing the developments. Recently a Fox TV crew visited the site and filmed the areas, formerly controlled by the PKK and destroyed by Turkish army. The conclusion is this: a military operation can be conducted against the PKK in northern Iraq despite US objections, and it is happening."

#### Turkey's Election Board to decide if Kurdish MPs can Run in Elections

Milliyet, Sabah, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Zaman and others report former Kurdish lawmakers Orhan Dogan and Selim Sadak said Turkey's High Election Board (YSK) is to decide whether five former deputies of the banned Democracy Party (DEP), convicted in 1991 of supporting terrorism, will be allowed to run as independent candidates in the July 22 general elections. Turkey's main Kurdish party DTP chairman Ahmet Turk told CNN-Turk over the weekend that Kurdish candidates have to be represented in parliament, "the place where problems are solved." "Incidents similar to those that took place in 1991 will not happen if we enter the parliament," Turk said commenting on the crisis that was created by the former DEP MPs when they took the oath in Kurdish during the swearing in ceremony in the parliament. Turk stressed, "We will adopt a mature and not a chauvinist approach." Turk said YSK will rule whether former lawmaker Leyla Zana and her colleagues will run in the elections or not.

#### Report Predicts Four Parties in Parliament

Mainstream Vatan carried on Saturday an elections forecast in a report released by CitiGroup, warning foreign investors to prepare for a coalition government in a four-party parliament. The report predicts the distribution of votes among parties as follows: AKP 37.0 percent, CHP+DSP 20.2, DYP+ANAP 13.1, MHP 10.1, GP 6.4, DTP

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4.3, Others 8.8, and Undecided 16.9.

#### Editorial Commentary on Wolfowitz, Blair

Ali H. Aslan writes in the Islamist-oriented daily Zaman: "President Bush must be feeling very bad nowadays. No, not because of the suffering he caused for Iraqis and Americans, but because of the fate of his two beloved friends, Tony Blair and Paul Wolfowitz, both of whom are leaving. Interestingly enough, the timing of Wolfowitz's resignation coincided with the visit of Tony Blair to the White House who was there to bid farewell to President Bush. In sum, two main figures of the Iraq war will fade from history, and I should add, not with a record of success. President Bush never wants to hear a word of criticism against Blair or Wolfowitz, even though these two misled him. This is simply because President Bush even today is unaware of being misled. He maintains his style of unilateral decision making and pursues an attitude which leaves no room for any cross questioning. That unilateral attitude was very obvious in the Wolfowitz case as well. When the World Bank scandal occurred, Wolfowitz avoided hearing any criticism against himself while the White House continued to back him up. There is a lesson to learn: he who acts unilaterally or ignores laws and regulations, using the end goals as an excuse, is doomed to face colossal failure. President Bush was dreaming of being a world emperor and he is now even unable to use his clout in his party. He became an unpopular lame duck. His primary team is dissolving, as Wolfowitz and Blair are the last in the chain. Let's hope that these lessons are also taken by neo-cons in Turkey who dream of ruling Turkey with in a fascist style."

#### TV News:

(NTV, 8 A.M.)

#### Domestic News

- Turkey-Greece natural gas pipeline will be inaugurated on July 14 with the participation of Turkish and Greek Prime Ministers Erdogan and Karamanlis.

- The main opposition CHP MP Sezai Onder died of lung cancer on Sunday.

- Sixty-one illegal migrants have been captured in the eastern

province of Van over the weekend.

- The latest Turkish letter of intent submitted to the IMF shows that electricity prices might be increased soon.

#### International News

- Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis said the Cyprus issue cannot be solved in 2007, adding a new window of opportunity might be opened in 2008.

- Former US Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad said Iraq's main creditors, including Saudi Arabia, will not write off billions of dollars in debt unless the country moves forward on national reconciliation, economic reform, and improving security.

- European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso warned Russia not to try to create divisions within the European Union.

- Six US soldiers and an Iraqi interpreter were killed by a roadside bomb in west of Baghdad on Saturday.

WILSON